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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/034,197	12/28/2001	Sanchaita Datta	3003.2.9A	7746

20551 7590 04/19/2004

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EXAMINER

NGUYEN, THU HA T

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2155

DATE MAILED: 04/19/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/034,197

Applicant(s)

Examiner

Thu Ha T. Nguyen

Art Unit

2155

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02/04/04.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120**

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

**Attachment(s)**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____  |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                          | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) <u>10</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other:  |

### DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims **1-21** are presented for examination.

#### Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments filed February 04, 2004 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive because of the following reasons:

3. Applicants argue that Kitai does not teach or suggest private networks. In response to Applicants' argument, Examiner asserts that Kitai does teach LAN 3050, 3100, 3200, 3300, 3400 (figures 3, 7) as private networks as broadly disclosed in Applicants' claimed language.

4. In response to applicant's argument that there is no suggestion to combine the references, the examiner recognizes that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, the reason to combine the teaching of Kitai and Pearce to have the controller control access to multiple independent frame relay networks, and each of the at least two private network interfaces comprises a frame relay network interface because it would have an efficient communication system to control and select the reliable, qualifiable network among multiple networks (see col. 2 lines 61-col. 3 lines 5).

5. Applicants argue that Pearce does not teach or suggest private networks. In response to Applicants' argument, Examiner asserts that Pearce Packet-switched (e.g., Ethernet) network as private network (col. 2 lines 1-30).

6. In response to applicant's argument that there is no suggestion to combine the references, the examiner recognizes that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, the reason to combine the teachings of Kitai and Dutta to have the packet path selector selects between private network interfaces according to a security criterion because it would improve the data transferring more secure and efficient (see col. 1 lines 29-63). Dutta teaches a firewall regulates the flow of packetized information and prevent unauthorized access to or from a private network. All messages entering or leaving the intranet pass through the firewall, which examines each message and blocks those that do not meet the specified security criteria.

7. In response to applicant's argument that there is no suggestion to combine the references, the examiner recognizes that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in

the art. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, the reason to combine the teachings of Kitai and Goldszmidt to have the controller send packets out of sequence order because it would have an efficient communication system to process, control and monitor the delivery of packet to control the traffic load (see col. 2 lines 65-col. 3 lines 11).

8. In response to applicant's argument that there is no suggestion to combine the references, the examiner recognizes that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, the reason to combine the teachings of Kitai, Pearce and Goldszmidt to specified criterion is one of reliability and security because it would have an efficient communication system to control, select and transfer data over the reliability, qualification and security network amongst multiple networks (Pearce reference, see col. 2 lines 61-col. 3 lines 5) (Goldszmidt reference, see figures 7, 8, col. 15 lines 44-57. Goldszmidt teaches the using of firewall to prevent unauthorized access to or from a private network. All messages entering or leaving the intranet pass through the firewall, which examines each message and blocks those that do not meet the specified security criteria).

9. As a result, cited prior arts do disclose a system and method for controlling access to multiple independent private networks, as broadly claimed by the Applicants. Applicants clearly have still failed to identify specific claim limitations that would define a clearly patentable distinction over prior arts.

10. Therefore, the examiner asserts that cited prior art teaches or suggests the subject matter broadly recited in independent claims 1, 13 and 19. Claims 2-12, 14-18, and 20-21 are also rejected at least by virtue of their dependency on independent claims and by other reasons set forth in the previous office action [see paper no. 9]. Accordingly, claims 1-21 are rejected.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

11. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. § 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless --

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) and the Intellectual Property and High Technology Technical Amendments Act of 2002 do not apply when the reference is a U.S. patent resulting directly or indirectly from an international application filed before November 29, 2000. Therefore, the prior art date of the reference is determined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

12. Claims 1, 3, 8-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by **Kitai et al.**, (hereinafter Kitai) U.S. Patent No. **5,948,069**.

13. As to claim 1, **Kitai** teaches the invention as claimed, including a controller which controls access to multiple independent private networks in a parallel network configuration, the controller comprising:

a site interface connecting the controller to a site (abstract, figures 3, 7, 15, 22, 24);

at least two private network interfaces (abstract, figures 3, 7, 22, col. 5 lines 29-63); and

a packet path selector which selects between private network interfaces according to a specified criterion (abstract, figures 3, 7, 15);

wherein the controller receives a packet through the site interface and sends the packet through the private network interface that was selected by the packet path selector (abstract, figures 3, 7, 15, 22, col. 2 lines 48-col. 3 lines 42, col. 5 lines 29-57).

14. As to claim 3, **Kitai** teaches the invention as claimed, wherein the packet path selector selects between private network interfaces according to a load-balancing criterion, thereby promoting balanced loads on devices that carry packets after the packets leave the selected private network interfaces (abstract, figures 9, 19, col. 8 lines 13-25, col. 14 lines 62-col. 15 lines 8, col. 20 lines 1-col. 21 lines 59).

15. As to claim **8**, **Kitai** teaches the invention as claimed, wherein the controller comprises at least three frame relay network interfaces, each of which is selectable by the packet path selector (abstract, figures 3, 7, 15, 22, col. 2 lines 48-col. 3 lines 42, col. 5 lines 29-57).

16. As to claim **9**, **Kitai** teaches the invention as claimed, wherein the controller operates in a system providing at least one point-to-point connection (col. 10 lines 50-65. col. 16 lines 8-23, col. 17 lines 1-10)

#### **Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103**

17. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

18. Claims 2, 4, 11, 13-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over **Kitai** U.S. Patent No. **5,948,069**, in view of **Pearce et al.**, (hereinafter **Pearce**) U.S Patent No. **5,910,951**.



19. As to claim **2**, **Kitai** does not explicitly teach the invention as claimed; however, **Pearce** teaches wherein the controller control access to multiple independent frame relay networks, and each of the at least two private network interfaces comprises a frame relay network interface (abstract, figures 1, 5, col. 1 lines 4-col. 2 lines 30). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of **Kitai and Pearce** to have the controller control access to multiple independent frame relay networks, and each of the at least two private network interfaces comprises a frame relay network interface because it would have an efficient communication system to control and select the reliable, qualifiable network among multiple networks.

20. As to claim **4**, **Kitai** does not teach the invention as claimed; however, **Pearce** teaches wherein the packet path selector selects between private network interfaces according to a reliability criterion thereby promoting use of devices that will still carry packets after the packets leave the selected private network interfaces, when other devices that could have been selected are not functioning (abstract, col. 2 lines 51-col. 3 lines 12). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of **Kitai and Pearce** to have the controller control access to multiple independent frame relay networks, and each of the at least two private network interfaces comprises a frame relay network interface because it would have an efficient communication system to control and select the reliable, qualifiable network among multiple networks.

21. As to claim 11, **Kitai** does not explicitly teach the invention as claimed; however, **Pearce** teaches wherein each private network interface is an indirect interface tailored to a particular type of frame relay network (abstract, figures 1, 5, col. 1 lines 4-col. 2 lines 30). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of **Kitai** and **Pearce** to have the process of each private network interface is an indirect interface tailored to a particular type of frame relay network because it would have an efficient communication system to control and select the reliable, qualifiable network among multiple networks.

22. As to claim 13, **Kitai** teaches the invention as claimed, including a method for combining connections for access to multiple parallel private networks, the method comprising the steps of:

obtaining a controller, the controller comprising a site interface, at least two private network interfaces, and a packet path selector which selects between private network interfaces according to a specified criterion (abstract, figures 3, 7, 15, 22, 24, col. 5 lines 29-63);

connecting the controller site interface to a site to receive packets from a computer at the site (abstract, figures 3, 7, 15, 22, col. 2 lines 48-col. 3 lines 42, col. 5 lines 29-57);

connecting a first private network interface of the controller to a first private network (abstract, figures 3, 7);

sending a packet to the site interface which then sends the packet through a private network interface selected by the packet path selector (abstract, figures 3, 7, 15, 22, col. 2 lines 48-col. 3 lines 42, col. 5 lines 29-57).

However, **Kitai** does not explicitly teach connecting a second private network interface of the controller to a second private network which is parallel to and independent of the first private network. **Pearce** teaches connecting a second private network interface of the controller to a second private network which is parallel to and independent of the first private network (abstract, figures 1, 5, col. 1 lines 47-col. 2 lines 60). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of **Kitai and Pearce** to have the process of connecting a second private network interface of the controller to a second private network which is parallel to and independent of the first private network because it would have an efficient and reliable communications system.

23. As to claim 14, **Kitai** does not explicitly teach the invention as claimed; however, **Pearce** teaches wherein the private networks are frame relay networks (abstract, figures 1, 5, col. Col. 1 lines 4-col. 2 lines 30). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of **Kitai and Pearce** to have the private networks are frame relay networks because it would have an efficient communication system to control and select the reliable, qualifiable network among multiple networks.

24. As to claim **15**, **Kitai** teaches the invention as claimed, further comprising the step of specifying the criterion for use by the packet path selector, wherein the specified criterion is a load balancing criterion (abstract, figures 9, 19, col. 8 lines 13-25, col. 14 lines 62-col. 15 lines 8, col. 20 lines 1-col. 21 lines 59).

25. As to claim **16**, **Kitai** does not explicitly teach the invention as claimed; however, **Pearce** teaches the step of specifying the criterion for use by the packet path selector, wherein the specified criterion is a reliability criterion (abstract, col. 2 lines 51-col. 3 lines 12). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of **Kitai** and **Pearce** to have the controller control access to multiple independent frame relay networks, and each of the at least two private network interfaces comprises a frame relay network interface because it would have an efficient communication system to control and select the reliable, qualifiable network among multiple networks.

26. Claims 5, 17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over **Kitai** U.S. Patent No. **5,948,069**, in view of **Dutta et al.**, (hereinafter **Dutta**) U.S Patent No. **6,546,423**.

27. As to claim **5**, **Kitai** does not explicitly teach the invention as claimed; however, **Dutta** teaches wherein the packet path selector selects between private network interfaces according to a security criterion, thereby promoting use of multiple

private networks to carry different pieces of a given message so that unauthorized interception of packets on fewer than all of the private networks used to carry the message will not provide the total content of the message (abstract, figures 1-2, col. 1 lines 29-64, col. 5 lines 31-54). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of **Kitai and Dutta** to have the packet path selector selects between private network interfaces according to a security criterion because it would improve the data transferring more secure and efficient.

28. As to claim 17, **Kitai** does not explicitly teach the invention as claimed; however, **Dutta** teaches the step of specifying the criterion for use by the packet path selector, wherein the specified criterion is a security criterion (abstract, figures 1-2, col. 1 lines 29-64, col. 5 lines 31-54). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of **Kitai and Dutta** to have the packet path selector selects between private network interfaces according to a security criterion because it would improve the data transferring more secure and efficient.

29. Claims 6-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over **Kitai** U.S. Patent No. 5,948,069, in view of **Goldszmidt et al.**, (hereinafter Goldszmidt) U.S Patent No. 6,195,680.

30. As to claim **6**, **Kitai** does not explicitly teach the invention as claimed; however, **Goldszmidt** teaches wherein the controller sends packets out of sequence over the parallel private networks (abstract, figures 3, 5). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of **Kitai and Goldszmidt** to have the controller sends packets out of sequence order because would have an efficient communication system to process, control and monitor the delivery of packet to control the traffic load.

31. As to claim **7**, **Kitai** does not explicitly teach the invention as claimed; however, **Goldszmidt** teaches wherein the controller places an encrypted sequence number in at least some of the packets which are sent out of sequence (abstract, figure 7, col. 1 lines 45-col. 2 lines 18, col. 15 lines 14-43). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of **Kitai and Goldszmidt** to have the controller places an encrypted sequence number in at least some of the packets which are sent out of sequence because would have an efficient communication system to encrypt packet to improve its tolerance to error, lost and secure.

32. Claims 10, 12, 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over **Kitai** U.S. Patent No. **5,948,069**, in view of **Albright et al.**, (hereinafter Albright) U.S Patent No. **6,209,039**.

33. As to claim **10**, **Kitai** does not explicitly teach the invention as claimed; however, **Albright** teaches wherein the controller operates in a system providing connectivity over at least two frame relay networks from at least two carriers, each frame relay network operating on its own clock which is different from the clock of the other frame relay network (abstract, figures 2-3, 7, col. 10 lines 36-col. 11 lines 9, col. 13 lines 27-52). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of **Kitai and Albright** to have at least two frame relay networks from at least two carriers, each frame relay network operating on its own clock which is different from the clock of the other frame relay network because it would have an efficient communications system that provides a number of point-to-point channels with different carriers and clocks through multiplexing network to improve network traffic and failure.

34. As to claim **12**, **Kitai** does not explicitly teach the invention as claimed; however, **Albright** teaches wherein each private network interface is a direct interface comprising an Ethernet card (col. 13 lines 38-52). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of **Kitai and Albright** to have each private network interface is a direct interface comprising an Ethernet card because it would have an efficient communications system that provide Ethernet card to improve private network security, traffic and failure.

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35. As to claim **18**, **Kitai** does not explicitly teach the invention as claimed; however, **Albright** teaches wherein at least one of the steps connecting a private network interface of the controller connects the controller to a User-to-Network Interface in a router of a frame relay network (abstract, figure1). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of **Kitai and Albright** to have a the controller connects the controller to a User-to-Network Interface in a router of a frame relay network because it would improve private network security, traffic and failure.

36. Claims 19-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 (a) as being unpatentable over **Kitai** U.S. Patent No. **5,948,069**, and **Pearce** U.S. Patent No. **5,910,951**, in view of **Goldszmidt** U.S Patent No. **6,195,680**.

37. As to claim **19**, **Kitai** teaches the invention as claimed, including a method for combining connections for access to multiple independent parallel frame relay networks, the method comprising the steps of:

38. sending a packet to a site interface of a controller, the controller comprising the site interface which receives packets, at least two network interfaces, and a packet path selector which selects between network interfaces according to a specified criterion; and specifying the criterion for use by the packet path selector, wherein the specified criterion is load balancing (abstract, figures 3, 7, 9, 15, 19, 22, 24,



col. 2 lines 48-col. 3 lines 42, col. 5 lines 29-63, col. 8 lines 13-25, col. 14 lines 62-col. 15 lines 8, col. 20 lines 1-col. 21 lines 59).

However, **Kitai** does not explicitly teach wherein the specified criterion is one of: reliability criterion, a security criterion. **Pearce** teaches the specified criterion is reliability criterion (abstract, col. 2 lines 51-col. 3 lines 12). **Goldszmidt** teaches the specified criterion is a security criterion (abstract, figures 1-2, col. 1 lines 29-64, col. 5 lines 31-54). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to combine the teachings of **Kitai**, **Pearce** and **Goldszmidt** to specified criterion is one of reliability and security because it would have an efficient communication system to control, select and transfer data over the reliability, qualification and security network amongst multiple networks.

39. As to claim **20**, **Kitai** teaches the invention as claimed, wherein the step of sending a packet to the controller site interface is repeated as multiple packets are sent, and the controller sends different packets of a given message to different frame relay networks (abstract, col. 3 lines 6-42).

40. As to claim **21**, **Pearce** teaches the invention as claimed, further comprising the step of sensing failure of one of the parallel frame relay networks and automatically sending traffic through at least one other parallel frame relay network (abstract, col. 2 lines 50-col. 3 lines 12, col. 5 lines 33-63). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the Data Processing art at the time of the invention to combine

the teachings of **Kitai and Pearce** to have step of sensing failure of one of the parallel frame relay networks and automatically sending traffic through at least one other parallel frame relay because it would detect and improve network security, traffic and failure.

### **Conclusion**

41. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

42. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

43. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Thu Ha Nguyen, whose telephone number is (703)

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305-7447. The examiner can normally be reached Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, SPE Hosain T. Alam, can be reached at (703) 308-6662.

Any inquiry of a general nature of relating to the status of this application should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-9600.

The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-872-9306 for regular communications.

Thu Ha Nguyen

April 15, 2004

  
**HOSAIN ALAM**  
**SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER**